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ABSTRACT

Techniques, materials, and coordinating efforts used in a political campaign are outlined for high school students. The objective is to familiarize students with these techniques so that they can become effective campaign volunteers. Topics include the candidate and the press, campaign publicity materials, organization of headquarters, receptions, the telephone campaign, and contact groups. Students are instructed about avoiding a hostile press, writing press releases, striving for media coverage, and designing materials such as leaflets, bumper stickers, and lawn signs. Instruction for the physical preparation of headquarters and staff training requirements are also included. Telephone strategies involve timing, securing the proper party, and conducting conversations. The document concludes with a list of helpful community groups. (KC)

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POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES

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Institute for Political/Legal Education

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES

The Institute for Political and Legal Education was developed through the cooperative efforts of the Institute staff, educators in local New Jersey districts, and the staff of the Office of Program Development, Division of Research, Planning, and Evaluation/Field Services, the Department of Education, State of New Jersey. The political and legal materials were developed between 1971 and 1974 with funding from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title III.

In 1974 the political education program was validated as successful, cost-effective, and exportable by the standards and guidelines of the United States Office of Education. As a result the program is now funded through ESEA, Title III as a demonstration site to provide dissemination materials and services to interested educators.

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ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Myron Judy, Program Administrator
John F. Khanlian, Program Coordinator
Louise C. Stern, Program Coordinator
Katherine L. Wallin, Program Coordinator
Agnes M. Gibbons, Executive Secretary
Patricia A. Bruder, Secretary

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT CENTER - SOUTH - LEA

Sherwood S. Wilson, Executive Director

PROJECT ADDRESS

INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL AND LEGAL EDUCATION
20 Delsea Drive (Route 47)
RD #4, Box 209
Sewell, New Jersey 08080
Telephone: (609) 228-6000

" . . . the seeds of political success are sown far in advance of any election day . . . It is the sum total of the little things that happen which leads to eventual victory at the polls."

J. Howard McGrath
Former Chairman, Democratic
National Committee

INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation is a fundamental principle in the democratic process. In addition to casting a ballot on Election Day, volunteer assistance in carrying out the campaign strategy is necessary to assure a candidate's success.

Political campaigns offer members of the community the opportunity to make a contribution (large or small depending upon individual time and inclination) to the overall campaign effort of the candidate of their choice. Each political campaign is different from the preceeding one because issues, candidates, leadership, public opinion and even voters change. Nevertheless, there are definite campaign techniques which have proven successful.

In recent years, candidates have relied increasingly on the volunteer efforts of students. The opportunities for active student participation are great. Your experience will be greatly enhanced if you become thoroughly familiar with some of the standard campaign techniques.

This booklet details some of the techniques, material and coordinating efforts used in the operation of a political campaign. The suggestions should assist your successful involvement in the political process at the grassroots level.

THE CANDIDATE AND THE PRESS

$$$

Publicity and wide public exposure is essential to a successful political campaign. Because a campaign is an expensive venture (despite new federal and state legislation limiting expenditures), free publicity is crucial.

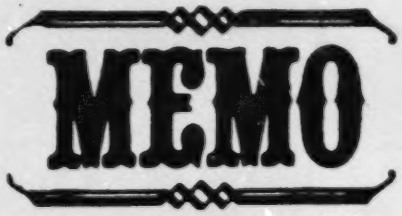
First Impressions

Visit the editors of the local papers. This courtesy call may well insure the placement of press releases on a forward page. In the early days of the campaign, the candidate should deliver the press releases to the reporter who is covering his election. This procedure gives the candidate an opportunity to become familiar with the reporter and vice versa.

Quality NOT Quantity!

Press releases should have something to say!! A newspaper office is flooded by meaningless press releases, most of which are filed in the infamous "round file cabinet" (waste basket). Every time the candidate reiterates a stand it is not news; if the candidate announces a new position or changes an old one -- THAT'S NEWS!

Get the most mileage possible.



Avoiding a Hostile Press

1. Give direct answers to questions.
2. Keep appointments; be prompt.
3. Know and adhere to the deadlines for press releases (10:00 a.m. in New Jersey).
4. DON'T EVER tell reporters how to write stories or photographers how to take pictures. (One can always politely decline from unflattering picture poses).

Appointing a Press Secretary

This person should coordinate all of the candidate's public relations activities. If possible, the appointment of someone who has had professional or extensive practical experience in public relations, newspaper, or television work is desirable. If such a person is not available, someone who writes well, has a pleasant personality, and someone who is "cool under fire," should be selected.

Understanding the Media's Needs

While making personal contact with the media, a candidate can determine what the media needs to give his publicity maximum display and impact. For example, in what form do newspapers, radio, and television stations want publicity submitted. Often editors will simply ignore submissions which do not meet a prescribed format. Ask what the deadlines are against which the media work. An effective press relations chairman knows the deadlines for each media and meets them! Ascertain the kind of stories that the media wants to feature. Most editors have a clear idea of the kind of stories they wish to give space or time.

Developing a "Nose for News"

The very best press secretary quickly develops a keen sense for what is news. Not only does he know that the election of officers, social events, meetings, and campaign workshops are news, but also he quickly senses that candidate rallies, special projects, and visiting celebrities can be built into major "front page news." Beyond this, the outstanding publicity chairman helps "create" favorable news by providing the Party and the media with ideas for interesting feature articles, picture stories, and television interviews.

Knowing How to Write the Story

Confirm with newspaper editors and the news editor of the television and radio stations the format for press releases. Although the preferred form varies somewhat according to the media, the following general rules are almost universally approved:

1. All stories should be typed on 8 1/2 x 11 white paper, double spaced, with ample margins. Never send carbon copies.
2. In the upper left corner type your name, your organization's name, your phone number, and address. Indicate in the upper right corner when you want the news released.

3. On the first page start typing about one-third of the way down, leaving the editor room for headline material. If there are more than a single page, type "more" at the bottom of page one. Indicate the end of the story either by the notation "30" or "###."
4. In writing the story, place the most important news in the first paragraph including the who, what, when, where, why, and how. Use short words, sentences, and paragraphs. Cut out unnecessary adjectives and flowery phrases. Avoid long stories unless the editor has specifically agreed to run a long story.

Using Pictures to Increase News Impact

"One picture is worth a thousand words." Sometimes having an attractive picture to submit makes the difference between getting in the media and not getting in the media. Never write or type on the back of a picture; never attach a paper clip to a picture because it can ruin the finish. Type the caption on a separate piece of paper and paste this to the back.

Striving for Special Coverage by the Media

The press secretary should make every effort to obtain special coverage of major events like campaign dinners and rallies. To increase the chances of receiving special coverage, follow these rules:

1. Be sure the media has advance notice of the event. The press covers numerous events throughout the community; therefore, they need to schedule their time in advance.
2. Provide the press with free tickets to the event. Do not expect the press to pay to cover a dinner or rally.
3. Provide the special facilities the media needs to cover the event. Arrange for a press table. Make sure that lighting and electrical outlets are adequate for filming.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS: KEEP IT SHORT; KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Basic Leaflet

A basic leaflet or flier provides all essential information about the candidate in brief but comprehensive terms. It is designed to be kept and studied, or handed from one person to another. See the sample of a one page inexpensive yet effective flier which can be widely distributed at minimum cost, Appendix I.

Small Cards

A 2 x 3 inch card with the candidate's picture, name, and the office is useful for mass distribution.

Litter Bags

A litter bag is useful in cars, and provides good exposure for the candidate.

Shopping Bags

Shopping bags may be distributed at shopping centers, flea markets, and an occasional county fair and get the candidate's name and/or picture widely circulated.

Bumper Stickers

Bumper stickers are miniature traveling billboards. A good bumper sticker is bright, attractive, and easy to read. Fluorescent type colors are preferable. Order only stickers guaranteed easily removable.

Lawn Signs

Lawn signs are preferable as a substitute for large billboards since they are less expensive and do not give the campaign a "Madison Avenue" appearance. When placed on the lawns of many homes, they give the appearance of good "grass roots" or "ground swell" support. Attempt to locate areas for placement of signs where there is alot of vehicular traffic and consequently wide public exposure for the candidate.

Campaign Buttons

Campaign buttons come in all sizes and styles. The most familiar type is round with a pin, on metal or plastic-covered metal. Sizes range from 1/4 inch to 2 inches in diameter. They can be made in the candidate's campaign colors and may carry a picture or simply the name and the office: JONES FOR MAYOR.

HEADQUARTERS

Dependent upon the amount of money available and personal choice, a headquarters may be established.

Selecting a Site

The headquarters should be the campaign "nerve" center from which all activities are coordinated. Party personnel including county chairman, the municipal chairman or local committemen may be helpful in obtaining a suitable headquarters. Also contact sympathetic storeowners, businessmen or landlords of vacant stores to help either secure a location or defer costs of the headquarters. Storefront headquarters help create the illusion of "grassroots" campaigning.

Establishing the Headquarters

1. Physical preparation
   a. Clean headquarters (mopping, sweeping, etc.).
   b. Install at least one telephone line.
   c. Attractively decorate headquarters with the usual red, white, and blue, or with candidate's color theme, candidate's picture, posters, etc. (Caution: Don't overcrowd the walls and windows with material; it will then appear cramped and junky.)

2. Staff training and responsibilities
   a. Volunteers should be instructed: (1) to be courteous and considerate; (2) to dress neatly; and (3) to deliver all memos and messages to the proper people promptly.
   b. Volunteers should be available on a scheduled basis: (1) to greet people and answer the questions; (2) to distribute campaign literature; and (3) to answer the telephone.

Note: When answering the telephone, instead of "hello," have volunteers say "Jones for Mayor headquarters, may I help you?" (No matter how exhausted, everyone should be cheerful and enthusiastic!

3. Typical headquarters hours:

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Monday through Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. - as Election Day draws near (from second week in October on)

" . . . There is no worse cardinal sin than to keep 'banker's hours' during a campaign for any office . . Irresponsible and lazy staff people can destroy a campaign . . ." - Robert F. Kennedy -

In lieu of a headquarters, the candidate may opt for a "Decision Control Center."

1. Use the recreation room, den, or basement of a volunteer.
2. Install an extra telephone line to avoid tying up the person's home telephone.
3. Coordinate all activities from this area. (This is necessary so staff and volunteers will know where campaign manager can be reached when needed.)
4. Place a sign outside of the home designating the residence as a community campaign headquarters. (This is helpful in giving people the impression that members of the community not only support the candidate but also are working for him).

COFFEE PARTIES AND RECEPTIONS

The candidate can meet and establish close rapport with a large number of constituents through the coffee party. This method is especially useful in local campaigns where the candidate can afford to spend an hour meeting twenty or thirty people.

Here is a good way to organize a series of parties to make the best use of time:

1. Appoint a Coffee Party Chairman who can make calls during the day to recruit hostesses to give parties in specific areas (a city or town, possibly a county).
2. Schedule several events during an evening or afternoon, spaced to allow the candidate to meet each of the people present and then move on to the next party.
3. Inform coffee party host or hostess of responsibilities:
   a. to invite the guests and encourage as great attendance of friends and neighbors as possible. (Note: Always invite twice as many guests since it takes many more invitations to achieve the desired acceptance.)
   b. to provide light refreshments such as coffee and donuts. Expenses should be kept to a minimum and are generally assumed by the hostess.

4. Have the candidate arrive after the guests have assembled, speak personally to everyone there, make a brief, informal talk on the major campaign issues, and answer a few questions before going on to the next engagement.
5. Use the "arrival/departure" format to assure that the candidate's time is equally proportioned when he or she is scheduled at several receptions. Note that the particular example, shown below, assures the candidate that he will have someone at the reception preceding (advance man) and following (liason man) his appearance.

Campaign Reception Arrival/Departure Format

Advance staff member arrives. He informs the hostess approximately how long it will be until the candidate arrives.
Candidate, campaign manager, public/party liason arrive and pass out campaign literature. The hostess introduces candidate, who delivers a brief (ten minute) speech.
Advance man leaves. He proceeds to the next reception.
Candidate greets participants. After speech the candidate meets and speaks with all those present (twenty-thirty minutes) answering questions and stimulating volunteer support.
Candidate and campaign manager depart.
Public/party liason staffer stays behind to answer any remaining questions and to record names and addresses of all people interested in becoming campaign volunteers.

THE TELEPHONE CAMPAIGN

Instructions for Telephone Volunteers

1. No calls should be made to business numbers.
2. Be polite, courteous and factual.
3. If someone asks a question you cannot answer, say that you will be glad to have someone who is familiar with the subject call back with a detailed reply. (Note the name, number, and question, and give to the appropriate staff member.) A file should be kept to insure that all questions are answered.
4. If anyone you call is rude or discourteous, terminate the conversation as quickly and politely as possible.
5. If a child answers, ask for his parents or some older person.
6. If someone answers who does not speak English, or for some other reason cannot understand your message, terminate the conversation quickly and politely.
7. Do not call before 9:00 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m. or at mealtime.

Telephone Strategy

The best strategy in using telephone volunteers is to place them in geographically strategic locations throughout the community. Someone who identifies himself as a neighborhood resident will tend to have more effect upon the person receiving the call. It is the psychology of familiarity in this particular case. All conversations should be short, lasting no more than a couple of minutes. An example of one type of call would be:

> "Good evening Mrs. Dann, I'm Josephine Billings, your neighbor on Euclid Street. As a member of this community I am concerned about the problems facing our township. I am working with the committee to elect DANIEL SMITH to City Council because I think that DANIEL SMITH has the background and experience to help resolve some of these problems. You will be receiving literature on Mr. Smith. I hope you will consider voting for DANIEL SMITH for City Council November ____. Thank you."

In telephoning, the goal is to inform the voter about the candidate and whenever possible to get a commitment to vote for the candidate.

One method of organizing the telephone campaign is to use voter registration lists which can be obtained from the county or town clerk. Once phone numbers are placed on these lists, calling can begin on a precinct by precinct basis with the precincts with highest voter turnout contacted first. It is important to record voter reaction, either on the voter registration list or on separate telephone information sheets. See Appendix II. Where there has been positive name identification and expressed support, the name should be marked with a "Y" indicating a "yes" voter. All "yes" voters should be called back on Election Day.

ONE OUT OF FIVE TECHNIQUE

With time at a premium and its best utilization vital, the one out of five technique is an excellent method to provide a candidate wide coverage in a short time. A campaign worker, preferably a resident of the community being walked, should accompany the candidate introducing him or her to neighbors and describing briefly key qualifications and positions on major issues. This is a good time to hand out literature on the candidate because psychologically, a resident will have a more positive reaction to the candidate by receiving the material personally, rather than via the mail. While the candidate and one staff member are calling on homes on one

side of the street, another staff volunteer can be contacting residents on the other side of the street.

By visiting every fourth or fifth house, neighbors will communicate to one another the candidate's message and that they received a personal visit from the candidate. This schedule will best utilize the candidate's time and give an illusion or impression that the candidate or one of his representatives is visiting every citizen.

HOW GROUPS CAN HELP

Community groups can be very helpful. One way is through a public endorsement. Another method is by sponsorship--or joint sponsorship with other groups--of a newspaper advertisement. People are greatly influenced by an ad which is signed by groups or individuals highly respected in the community.

A group may vote to contribute financial support. If an organization is unwilling to make that commitment, it may still be possible to get significant campaign assistance from individual members.

If a group is willing to give the candidate its membership list, a special mailing stressing the campaign issues that are most likely to win the group's support can be very useful.

Additionally, valuable campaign volunteers can be recruited through such groups.

Major Groups to Contact

1. Labor - Central Labor Council; COPE (AFL-CIO); Teamsters DRIVE; UAW's Community Action Program, etc.
2. Business Organizations - Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, etc.
3. Black Groups - Urban League, CORE, NAACP, SCLC, etc.
4. Spanish-Surnamed Groups - American G.I. Forum; LULAC; MAPA in California; PASO in Texas, etc.
5. Women's Organizations - Business & Professional Women; AAUW, garden clubs, auxiliaries of service and civic clubs, etc.
6. Veteran Groups - American Legion, VFW, Disabled Veterans, etc.
7. Professional Organizations - American Bar Association, National Bar Association, American Medical Association, etc. Scientists, educators, CPA's, nurses, social workers, engineers, architects, all should be included.

8. Farmers - Rural Electric Cooperative, Farmers Co-op, National Farmers Union, National Farmers Organization, Dairymen's League or Milk Producers Association, etc.
9. Youth Groups - Student associations of local high schools and colleges, YMCA, YMHA, YWCA, YWHA, Catholic Youth Organization, Future Farmers of America, Referendum '70, Project Purse Strings, etc.
10. Senior Citizen Groups.
11. College and high school political science classes; an excellent source of volunteers.

Keep a Card File

A card file of special interest groups in your area should be developed and public appearances scheduled whenever possible. Include the following information.

1. Organization's name and purpose
2. Number of members
3. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of officers and your contact in the organization
4. Date and place of regular meetings
5. Campaign issues in which its members are most likely to be interested.

CAMPAIGN STAFF MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

(See chart for organization structure)

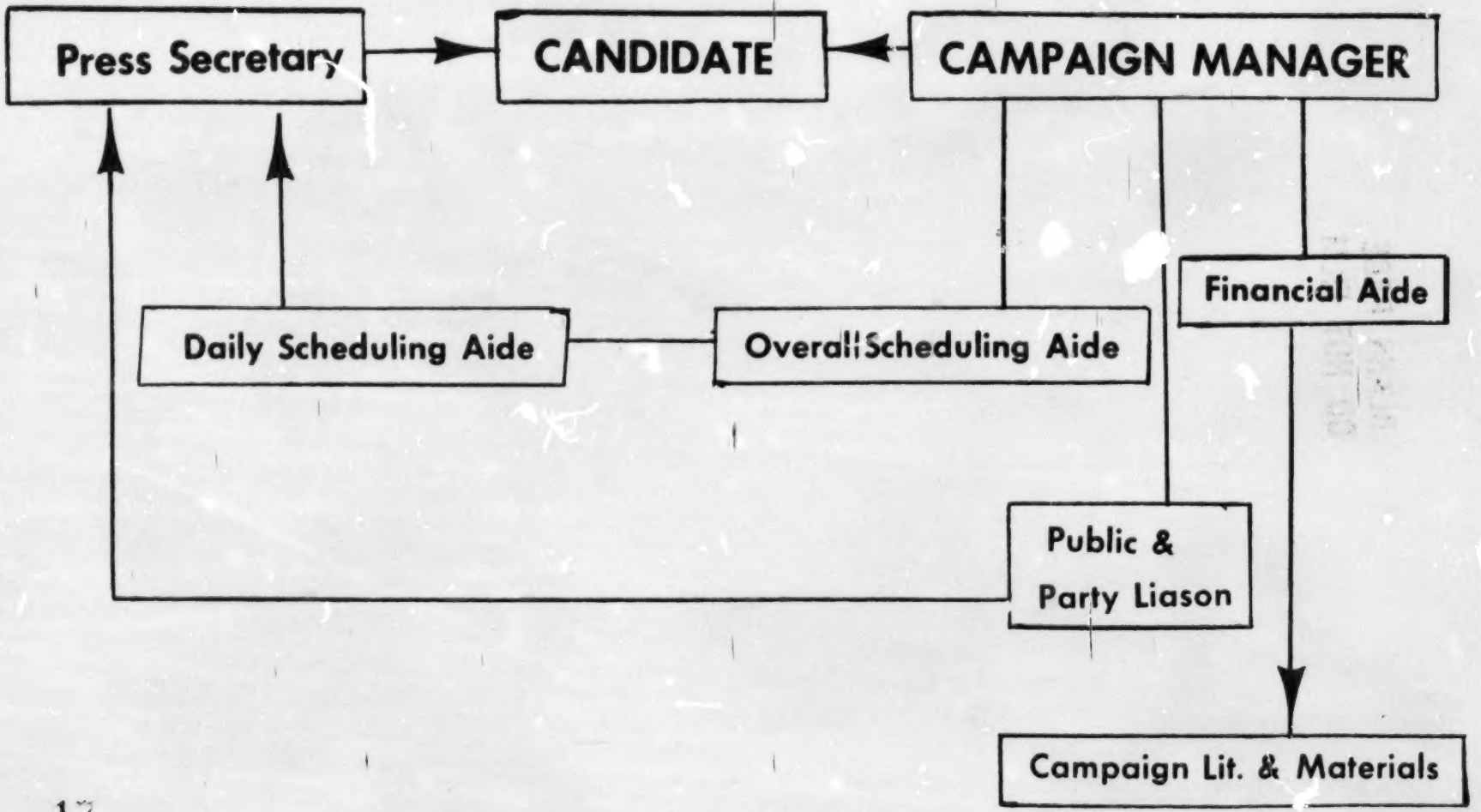
Administrative:

a. Scheduling/appointment aide (overall)
b. Financial aide
c. Campaign material/literature aide

Field:

a. Campaign manager
b. Press secretary
c. Scheduling aide (daily)
d. Public/Party liason
e. Advance man
f. Driver

Campaign Staff



Appendix I

Meet Gwyned "NED" Williams

Candidate For Local School Board

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

QUALIFICATIONS

B.A. BUSINESS ADMIN., BETHLEHEM BUSINESS COLLEGE
B.A. THEOLOGY, MORAVIAN COLLEGE
M.A. THEOLOGY, PRINCETON
DIRECTOR, RIVERSIDE ROTARY CLUB
CHAIRMAN, ZURBRUGG HOSPITAL DRIVE
PRES/TREAS., TRIPPLE TOWNS MINISTERIAL ASSOC.
MEMBER (5 YRS.) EASTERN COMMISSION OF EDUCATION, MORAVIAN CHURCH
ACTIVE IN CUB PACK 52, B.S.A.
MARRIED TO EMMA WILLIAMS (FORMER RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY TEACHER)

DEAR CITIZEN,

I would like to introduce myself to you not as a candidate but as a man of the community.

I believe that there is something wrong with the present state of operations of the Riverside School System and would like you to consider me as a concerned community resident willing to improve that program. It is not my intent to blame any individual or group for the problems I feel are plaguing our educational system. The urgency of the problems precludes the luxury of wasting time haggling over blame.

My concern stems from the following items, all indicative of citizen dissatisfaction with the present educational system:

1. I hear parents complaining about dissatisfaction with local school operations. Families have left the community in the past few years in order to take their children to another school district.
2. I have talked to students who are confused and disappointed over the fact that they often feel that nobody cares about their achievements and successes in education or extra-curricular activities.
3. I have spoken with teachers who complain about their feeling that nobody cares about them except at a bargaining table.
4. I have witnessed a school board make decisions, claim they are going to stand by them, and then completely reverse themselves.
5. I have spoken to local taxpayers who are proud of Riverside and its past but feel that increased tax dollars are earning decreased educational services.
6. I have been part of other community groups who often feel as if there is some kind of wall between their work and the work of the school system.

After long consideration, I have decided to offer myself as a candidate for the local school board.

I promise, if elected, to personally study and evaluate the operation of our local educational program and to report to the community the situation as it really exists. I vow to give only "creative criticism" -- offering constructive solutions to the problems that confront our educational system.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT IF YOU ARE COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH THE LOCAL RIVERSIDE SCHOOL PROGRAM, VOTE FOR ONE OF THE OTHER CANDIDATES. BUT IF YOU WANT TO SEE CREATIVE PROGRESS, THEN I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VOTE.

SINCERELY,

Gwyned "Ned" Williams

"A CANDIDATE OF CONCERN"

Appendix II

COMMITTEE TO ELECT JONES FOR MAYOR

Telephone Survey Sheet

Code
Y = positive reaction
? = maybe
N = negative reaction
CB = call back with requested information
V = wants to volunteer

Precinct # _____
Date called _____
Name of caller _____

Name	Address	Phone #	Voter Reaction